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October 5, 2022  
NEWS RELEASE  
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## Trees Can Keep Us Cool as Iowa Anticipates Many More Dangerous Hot and Humid Days

Climate change is here. In Iowa we have witnessed more frequent and intense heavy precipitation, floods, droughts, and powerful derechos - all of which create conditions that threaten our trees. The **Iowa Climate Statement 2022: The Many Benefits of Our Trees** released today is focused on the climate threats and strategies to expand and support urban trees and rural woodlands.

“Iowa is going to become much hotter in the decades ahead. It is projected that Iowa will go from having a handful of 95° days in 2022, to having as many as thirty-five, 95° days per year in 2050. And, ninety-five, 95° days a year by 2080,” said **Jerry Schnoor**, Co-director, UI Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research. “Projections also indicate Iowa will experience 5-15 days each year over 106 °F during the period 2041-2061,” continued Schnoor.

“The August 2020 derecho, the most destructive thunderstorm in US history is emblematic of the impact of climate change on our trees. This extreme event led to the loss of an estimated 7 million rural and urban trees in Iowa,” said **Dave Courard-Hauri**, Chair of Environmental Science and Sustainability Program, Drake University. “Recovering from this event will take years of coordinated efforts and millions of dollars of investment,” continued Courard-Hauri.

“Attention to the species of trees we plant and their care will be crucial for their survival. Strategies are needed both to sustain the many benefits of existing large mature trees and to increase planting of appropriate new trees for mitigating and adapting to climate change,” said **Jan Thompson**, Morrill Professor, Natural Resource Ecology and Management, Iowa State University. “Tree keep us cool. The proper placement of just three trees can save an average household between \$100 and \$250 in energy costs annually,” continued Thompson.

“With their wealth of ecological and social benefits, the trees we have are valuable. We need to plant diverse species of trees to promote resilience and support and strengthen Iowa’s on-going tree planting programs,” said **Heather Sander**, Associate Professor, Geographical and Sustainability Sciences, University of Iowa. “In the face of climate change we should both plant more trees and provide essential care for the precious trees we already have.” continued Sander.

The twelfth annual **Iowa Climate Statement 2022: The Many Benefits of Our Trees** was endorsed by Iowa 203 science faculty and researchers from 33 Iowa colleges and universities.

The UI Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research has coordinated the release of annual climate statements since 2012. These statements, vetted by Iowa's top experts, place pivotal climate change research into an Iowa-specific context, encouraging preparedness and resilience in the face of a climate crisis.

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### Credits:

The lead authors of the **Iowa Climate Statement 2022: The Many Benefits of Our Trees** include: **Heather Sander**, Associate Professor, Geographical and Sustainability Sciences, University of Iowa; **Jan Thompson**, Morrill Professor, Natural Resource Ecology and Management, Iowa State University; **Jerry Schnoor**, Co-director, UI Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research; **Gene Takle**, Emeritus Professor of Agronomy, Iowa State University and **David Courard-Hauri**, Chair of Environmental Science and Sustainability, Drake University.

Contributing authors to the statement include: **Matt Dannenberg**, Assistant Professor, Geographical and Sustainability Sciences, University of Iowa; **Bill Gutowski**, Professor of Meteorology Department of Geological and Atmospheric Sciences, Iowa State University; **David Osterberg**, Emeritus Professor, College of Public Health, University of Iowa; **Ulrike Passe**, Associate Professor of Architecture, Director Center for Building Energy Research, Iowa State University; and **Peter S. Thorne**, Professor and Head, Occupational & Environmental Health, Associate Director, Environmental Health Sciences Research Center, College of Public Health, University of Iowa.

### The 33 colleges and universities of statement endorsers:

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*Endorser affiliations are for identification purposes only and do not reflect views of their academic institutions.*

The previous statements are available at [www.iowaenvironmentalfocus.org](http://www.iowaenvironmentalfocus.org)